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Bangalore Mirror ON SATURDAY

TEMP Max 26 | Min 20 | Humidity 72% Partly Cloudy Sensex 72,026 | Nifty 21,710 | Gold 62,272 | Silver 72,065 | Dollar 83.23 | Euro 90.70 | GBP 105.15

11 lakh waste management offences booked, Rs 29 cr generated in penalties between 2019 and 2023

WASTED AWAY

'200 blackspots reported in 8 months, 37 piles set on fire'

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Despite the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) door-to-door waste collection, many blackspots and incidents of waste piles set on fire are being reported from across the city.

According to a city-based NGO, as many as 200 blackspots were reported by citizens over the last eight months. Out of these, as many as 37 garbage piles were set on fire too.

The data was gathered by 'namma clean-Bengaluru', an online application by Jhatkaa.org that allows citizens to report garbage spots within 500 metres of their vicinity. The application helps citizens connect with BBMP officials concerned and create a citizen squad to fight the garbage menace in the future.

Experts said garbage pile-ups and burning are significant contributors to the deteriorating Air Quality Index (AQI) of the city. Despite substantial fines imposed by BBMP for garbage burning and dumping, no noticeable improvement in the city's unsegregated waste piles has been witnessed.

"We have received 200 reports of garbage piles from various parts of the city in eight months. Bengaluru currently generates more than 6,233 tonnes of garbage every day

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 »

JOHN CAMERON/UNSPLASH

"Bengaluru generates more than 6,233 tonnes of garbage every day... only 10% gets recycled

— Chiku Agarwal, Jhatkaa.org

Queen's gambit

Small park, Queen Victoria statue in shambles

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The Queen Victoria statue at the entrance of Cubbon Park from MG Road side craves for attention of the authorities concerned. It seems no one – the state horticulture department nor the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) horticulture wing – is keen to maintain the small park and pathway around the statue.

Bengaluru Smart City Limited did not take a step to develop the park while it took up developmental works worth crores of rupees at Cubbon Park and Bal Bhavan.

Cables are used to lock the gates to the place. The lights around the statue are damaged. There are 10 decorative lights but six of them were 'damaged by vandals' despite the place being just a stone's throw away from Cubbon Park police station.

"The pathetic condition of this place is disturbing. It is better to remove or relocate the Queen Victoria statue from this place if the authorities concerned cannot maintain it properly. The authorities must keep the place clean and neat. I want the authorities to replace damaged decorative lights without any delay," said Mohan Kumar, a pedestrian.

Expressing concern over the negligence towards Queen Victoria statue, Prabhakar S, a visitor, said Cubbon Park police have to keep a vigil on miscreants who vandalised decorative lights. "It is a busy place; Cubbon Park police station is just a few metres away. It may not be a tough task for the police to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 »

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Classical tune

Celebrate the richness of Indian classical dances, presented by Venkatesha Natya Mandir. 'Rasa Sanje', an annual dance festival, aims to promote and increase awareness of Indian classical dance. The festival has been known to provide a forum for national and international dancers to show their choreographies. **Where: Ada Ranga Mandira, JC Road; When: January 6 and 7; 10 am**

02 Lights camera action!

Tahatto presents the 5th edition of 'Enter Stage Right', a workshop designed to give participants insights into the critical aspects of theatre. Don't miss the chance to tap into your creativity, learn, and apply it in the form of a final performance at the end of the workshop.
Where: Lahe Lahe, Indiranagar
When: January 6 to 21; 9:30 am to 5:30 pm

03 Story for kids

Ranga Shankara's signature storytelling programme, Little Cloud, is back. Kids of 4 to 6 years of age can participate in these storytelling sessions held in multiple languages by multiple artists. Grown-ups are not allowed.
Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar
When: January6–February 25 (on Saturdays and Sundays); 10 am–11 am

Canines cry for help

Society for Animal Safety points out incident of animal cruelty in Varthur jurisdiction; members come across injured dogs kept in unfit enclosures

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PICTURE FOR REPRESENTATION ONLY

The volunteers observed that some of the dogs were in very bad condition and rescued some of the ill dogs; six indie puppies, one Siberian husky, and more were kept in enclosures

Animal rescuers and members of the Society for Animal Safety (SAS) Karnataka wrote a letter to the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) and made a complaint to the Varthur Police Station, highlighting an incident of animal cruelty. They alleged that an individual running an unlicensed shelter in the Varthur jurisdiction has over 150 dogs in a deplorable enclosure that is suspected to be a result of illegal dog relocation.

One of the volunteers, who has been actively involved in the rescue of animals, came across some of the dogs at this shelter that were not properly taken care of. According to the letter submitted by Tarun Agarwal, President of SAS Karnataka, to the Varthur Police Station, there was medical neglect for a dog named Kaveri, resulting in severe health issues. There have been deaths of puppies due to alleged malnutrition, dehydration, and a lack of proper care. Acts of inhumane confinement of rescues, hindering their physical and mental wellbeing, denial of adoption opportunities for heavy-breed dogs, and lack of essential amenities such as clean water, shelter, and proper medical attention have been pointed out.

The volunteers observed that some of the dogs were in very bad condition and rescued some of the critically ill dogs. Six indie puppies and seven breed dogs, which included three Labradors, one Mudhol, one Siberian husky, one golden retriever, one French bulldog, and one severely injured indie dog, were kept in unfit enclosures. Agarwal said, "Some of the critically sick dogs were rescued and taken into custody. But there are still more than 150 indie dogs locked up in confined places. These healthy dogs were illegally taken and discarded in an open area with one roof over them. These dogs are suffering now because the AHVS department doesn't have an active SPCA. According to the law, SPCAs should have a place ready to accommodate such cases. Now these dogs have nowhere to go."

In order to resolve this issue in the best interest of animals, there is an implementation plan that should be followed at the shelter, and notice should be sent to the individual running the shelter along with the plan to be followed, he added.

According to Agarwal, firstly, there should be a shelter registration requirement, like establishing a protocol for obtaining and renewing shelter registration from the relevant office.

> **"Some of the critically sick dogs were rescued and taken into custody. But there are still more than 150 indie dogs locked up** –Tarun Agarwal

Secondly, basic needs assurance includes developing comprehensive care guidelines, including medical attention, clean water, and appropriate food. Third is record of rescuer details, which is to implement a systematic record-keeping system for individuals rescuing and delivering dogs to the shelter. Fourth, there should be a mandatory adoption process by creating a formal adoption agreement outlining the standardised adoption process. There should also be a SAS right to intervention and inspection, and there should be training sessions for shelter staff on the agreement terms and the importance of compliance to raise awareness among volunteers, adopters, and the community about the commitment to animal welfare.

With the letter to the AWBI, the assistant secretary of the board responded to the letter and has asked the Karnataka Animal Welfare Board to treat this case as urgent and inform the AWBI of the action taken at the earliest.

When a storyteller comes to town

One of the country's most loved audio storytellers, Neelesh Misra, is all set to perform for the first time in Bengaluru on Saturday at an event in which he will narrate stories and film and non-film songs written by him.

The journalist, author, media entrepreneur, and Hindi film lyricist has significantly impacted India's audio and storytelling landscape, inspiring millions of listeners across various platforms.

The performance is to be held at the BR Ambedkar Auditorium at 6 pm and is part of his national storytelling journey with his band. The tour has already travelled to Pune and Gurgaon. The show in Bengaluru, spanning approximately two hours, promises to be a captivating journey through a spectrum of emotions—from love and nostalgia to thrilling drama. Misra's audience ranges from five-year-olds to grandparents and transcends geographical and demographic boundaries. "A storyteller is nothing without his listeners, and there is no greater joy than being able to narrate stories to a live audience. It is the greatest privilege," said Misra.

The performance is to be held today at the BR Ambedkar Auditorium at 6 pm

> **Neelesh Misra will narrate stories and recite film and non-film song lyrics written by him**

From writing lyrics for multiple blockbuster films and top-of-the-chart songs to creating content reflecting India's rural landscape through 'Gaon Connection,' Misra's work has garnered widespread acclaim. **— BMB**

Ambulances to get the green signal

Traffic police comes up with app exclusively to clear way for ambulances stuck in traffic

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The Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) is set to launch an app which could be a game changer for the ambulances that often get stuck in city traffic. DCP Traffic (South) Shiva Prakash Devaraju told Bangalore Mirror, "The traffic police are developing an app designed to assist ambulance drivers in navigating through traffic. The drivers can download the app and initiate their trips when transporting patients to hospitals."

He said the app would immediately relay information to the traffic management centre upon trip initiation, allowing dedicated staff to track the ambulances. "If an ambulance is stuck in traffic for more than two minutes, the control room is notified, prompting on-field personnel to clear the traffic. The app also aids in signal clearances by notifying traffic personnel at signals in advance. Additionally, it can contribute to establishing a green corridor for organ transport. This app is set to be released soon and promises to be a significant asset," the officer said.

Sources said that in Bengaluru, the sight of ambulances caught in traffic is common. Despite the blaring emergency sirens, these ambulances frequently face gridlock, making it challenging to proceed ahead. Recognising the importance of time for ambulance drivers, who strive to transport patients to healthcare facilities during the golden hour, the traffic police hope the app will facilitate communication between drivers and the control room, enabling quick intervention.

SPOT THE AMBULANCE: There is one stuck in traffic at any given time

The DCP stressed that this app is poised to diminish the time taken by ambulances to reach hospitals, thanks to technological interventions and improved coordination between the ambulance services and the police. This enhancement is especially beneficial during emergency scenarios.

> **If an ambulance is stuck in traffic for more than two minutes, the control room is notified, prompting on-field personnel to clear the traffic**
>
> –Shiva Prakash Devaraju, DCP Traffic

According to police, the lack of awareness and understanding among motorists regarding ambulances poses a significant challenge too. "When encountering an ambulance, it is crucial for motorists to prioritise the emergency vehicle to ensure timely medical assistance. Unfortunately, there are instances where motorists either refuse to give way to ambulances or attempt to exploit the situation for personal gain. Motorists should be educated on the potential consequences of obstructing the path of ambulances, which can directly impact the lives of those in need of urgent medical attention," said another police official.

He said motorists should be instructed to yield the right of way immediately upon hearing the siren or seeing the flashing lights of an approaching ambulance. "This involves safely pulling over to the side of the road, creating a clear path for the ambulance to navigate through traffic seamlessly. Additionally, there must be a concerted effort to discourage any attempts by motorists to compete with or drive recklessly behind ambulances. Such behaviour not only endangers the lives of those within the ambulance but also undermines the effectiveness of emergency response efforts," said another police official.

Clear corridors, right ahead

The traffic police highlighted that in 2023, a total of 22 green corridors were established to facilitate swift transportation of vital organs and patients within a relatively short timeframe. Illustratively, a heart was transported through a green corridor, covering a distance of 40 km from Kempegowda International Airport to Old Airport in just 35 minutes. "The traffic police have undergone sensitisation to accord higher priority to the movement of ambulances within the city. When the origin and destination are provided through the 112 helpline, the traffic police ensure the unimpeded movement of ambulances to their intended destinations. For instance, Bengaluru boasts a significant number of state-of-the-art multi-specialty hospitals and serves as a hub for numerous heart transplants. The duration crucial for the transportation of a heart from the donor hospital to the recipient hospital is exceptionally short, necessitating immediate transport without undue delays," added a police official.

BM Shoppers' Avenue

Consumer Connect Initiative

Ideas to make blouse designs extra-special

While a contemporary outfit can catch eyeballs, sticking to a conventional look will definitely work in your favour on special occasions. Traditional blouse designs don't have to be boring at all. You can try any one of the countless styles available and look amazing, be it for your special day or any other function. Read on for more.

For traditional saris

If you're going to be wearing a heavily embroidered sari, an exquisitely embellished sari, or a plain sari with a busy pattern, keep the blouse simple. Plain blouses with a simple neckline work best here.

For traditional banarasi saris or bandhani saris, you can stick to wearing a matching blouse. Alternatively, go for a contrasting look with colours or prints.

For chikankari saris, tant or cotton saris, play with texture as well by opting for different materials.

Tip: Keep it simple or dress to impress, you're guaranteed to look like a stunner in a sari!

Latest & trendy

Add elements such as pleats, ruffles, embellishments or cut work to make the designs trendier. Additionally, you can make your blouse trendy and fashionable with your choice of colour, pattern, or design.

For long skirt

A beautiful blouse paired with a billowy or pleated skirt can make for a stunning outfit in itself. Choose from these blouse styles:

- **Kutch work blouse**
- **Peplum blouse**
- **Jacket blouse**
- **Mandarin collar blouse**

Tip: Again, play with colours and patterns here for maximum impact. Kutch work traditional saree blouse designs can be paired with plain skirts, a plain silk peplum blouse can go with organza or embellished skirt, and so on.

With silk sarees

Silk saris are gorgeous on their own so you don't really need to think too much about the blouse. Keep the blouse simple and let the sari shine.

Tip: Silk saris are lustrous, so make sure you wear a blouse that matches the glam quotient of the sari or you'll dull the look of the six yards.

–Femina

RAJMOHAN SUDHAKAR

EVER CHANGING MOODS

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Physicality of things

The need of the hour is to touch and feel the grass — the physical world needs as much attention as the minuscule ones that we inhabit in smart gadgets.

The solution to the planet's problems too lie in the physical setting as the nature of current challenges is physical nevertheless.

Platform economy scrambling and shapeshifting to a generative AI-driven scape sidesteps physical realities - that even we are a physiological entity which may not survive the climate emergency.

The collective shouldn't push further the dissonance of tech that overlooks the great physical challenges of the 21st century while working against social cohesion only.

Social scientists must reflect on the role of platform economy in stunting the political ethos of a generation. What it has done is align the politics of youths to that of brute neoliberalism - in securing jobs and such - leaving them inert to react or even comprehend physical realities.

We are a physical entity, our existence marked by birth or death. So is our legacy, quintessentially physical, in species propagation, arts and letters, sustenance mechanisms like agriculture, industry, economy, space exploration and so forth.

In tech's promised land, however, we are seemingly dependent on what isn't physical: projections of great economic gain made solely by what isn't physically manifest.

Potential of data is one thing and translating the wisdom gleaned from such data to remedy harsh physical realities plaguing the less fortunate is another. The latter should have been a primary objective.

Tech has brought to a grinding halt the economic/industrial prosperity of post war and post colonial global south, and forced populations in these parts to embrace the hand-held device. It did not ensure a smooth transition. Perhaps that's why we see malls and neighbourhood stores doing not so well of late even as consumers hooked to OTT platforms order their entire lives online. The digital lived experience is insulated from everything, everywhere and every other person but yet calls itself a collective. Fact is, the commune has shrunk to even smaller units that seldom care for the collective. Such micro personalisation and disconnect make for a diminished society unable to reflect upon social realities or make informed choices of elected representatives.

We must introspect what tech in its minuscule trajectory did to our old ways. Has it benefited our populations, furthered democracy in the east or has it made the rich richer and poor poorer diluting essential scrutiny just because it could?

Personal data harvesting on a massive scale has been done, yes, since the inception of the social network-driven platform economy, beyond the scope or ambit of law/regulation, but it is not the only harm big tech has effected on society. After a decade of collective doom scrolling on smart devices, we have a burgeoning population of politically 'stunted' youths lost beyond measure to rise to occasion in revolt as warranted now, and demand accountability of politicians in the imploding democratic discourse.

Beyond efforts to downplay and brush under the carpet this body blow to democracy dealt by tech, there are critical aspects that need to be taken into account if we are to salvage humanity's prospects in a rapidly transforming ecosystem confronting climate fallout.

Policy vacuum in an abhorrent symbiosis of politicians, tech oligopoly and rogue entrepreneurs taking control of the tech complex, could have us forever groping in the dark of digital echo chambers.

We have to acknowledge physical realities overlooked for long, as hysterical and aimless tech forces itself upon vulnerable democracies in emerging markets, only this time round as AI.

Regulations are drawn up only by stakeholders such as the European Union. Such a cautious approach is non-existent in emerging economies as most US-based firms freely plant themselves in the east riding on that country's clout and geopolitical diplomacy.

The new digital terrain is altering the human psyche and how it approaches social life, its virtues and vices. Just translocating fallback mechanisms (such as therapy) in case of an economic collapse or crisis at the personal or collective level triggered by a flawed ecosystem of generative AI in future, may work in the west - primarily in Europe and north America - but not in the east.

The western press is now seen lost in a wellness spiral, paranoid and ring-fencing itself in the backdrop of the climate crisis, refugees seeking asylum, and the rise of the far right when it shall handhold the meek in earnest. Truth is, crises across the planet are more or less the handiwork of the west, and tech messiahs aren't helping in salvation or redemption.

Acknowledging this is a societal conundrum will go a long way in reclaiming the hollowed-out socio-political and cultural landscape of countries such as India. That tech, which populous societies embraced without second thought, is now playing a part in societal breakdown is sad but true.

Women drivers to board Namma Yatri

After free training, women drivers will be given electric autos on daily rental basis

Women drivers will be provided with electric autos

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Namma Yatri, the auto service aggregator backed by Juspay, is planning to onboard 1,000 women auto rickshaw drivers by June 2024.

Namma Yatri launched Mahila Shakti, a women drivers' initiative in collaboration with Bengaluru City Police and the Dr B R Ambedkar Health and Education Foundation. A statement from Juspay said that the Mahila Shakti programme offers a comprehensive one-month training course covering practical driving, traffic laws, safety, and vehicle maintenance.

"It also supports women in starting their own driving businesses. Targeting women aged from 25 to 45 years, the programme opens the path to higher income, economic independence, and flexible working hours. After the free training, Namma Yatri provides women with electric autos on a daily rent and facilitates low-interest vehicle ownership through financial institutions. Both customers and drivers have expressed high satisfaction and provided positive feedback about the programme," the statement explained.

Maghizhan Selvan, Chief Product Officer of Juspay said that Namma Yatri will be offering the free auto driving training programme covering comprehensive electric auto driving and maintenance, traffic rules, smart mobile phone usage, and customer service skills. "Parihar is an initiative of City Police, and is initiated to extend support, care, and guidance to women towards financial independence. In the context of Mahila Shakti program, Parihar will educate and counsel women on auto driving as a profession," he explained.

> **Targeting women aged 25 to 45 years, the programme opens up path to higher income**
>
> –Juspay statement

Further, Dr B R Ambedkar Health and Education Foundation, the partnering NGO for the initiative, will assist in obtaining learner's license for all qualified participants. "The training will commence at one of the four police training grounds for the initial period. Subsequently, practical driving training, under supervision, will take place in less crowded areas of Bengaluru," said Selvan.

BMRCL refutes ridership study; stresses on enthusiastic patronage

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The Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has clarified on a claim made in a report by IIT- Delhi and Delhi-based think tank Infravision, titled 'A framework for selecting an appropriate urban transport system in Indian cities', about the actual ridership not meeting the projected one. BMRCL has said that the comparison made in the study is of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) of 42.3 km prepared in 2003 and comparison on the ridership figures is done with the financial year rather than the calendar year in the DPR. It added that the metro has seen massive growth in its operational network and ridership since its beginning in 2011.

"In 2011, a new DPR for Phase 2, was prepared with Phase-1 plus the extension lines for 76.7 km. Two extension lines were added in 2021 and the operational network became 55.95 km from 42.3 km. For the operational network, the DPR figures for 2021 for 206 working days (due to covid) comes to 6,21,664 and daily average passengers carried comes to 2,69,985 for 206 working days, which works out to 43.43%," the corporation explained in a statement.

Phenomenal growth

Starting from the initial operational length of 6.7 km in 2011 with an average ridership of 33,000 per day, there has been a phenomenal growth in operational network to 73.81 km with an achievement of a maximum daily ridership of 7,65,525 on October 20, 2023, the corporation noted. "In fact, trains during peak hours are fully occupied in the CBD area and marginally less occupied in the peripheral area of Bengaluru city. There is persisting demand from the travelling public to increase the frequency of Metro trains as well as the operational timings which indicates that Namma Metro has substantial patronage as a public transport, with operations starting from 5 am to 11 pm for the convenience of the public and a separate coach is reserved for women for providing safety and security. Apart from this, many passengers want the metro station to open early and they prefer to wait for the station to open," the corporation elaborated.

Back pain battle: Holistic approaches, ergonomics

Experts advocate lifestyle changes over medication for back pain relief

Sitting for extended periods has become a pervasive issue, contributing to a rise in severe back pain, especially as individuals transition back to office settings. The sedentary lifestyle enforced by stay-at-home measures has led to a surge in complaints about back pain among office-goers. Health experts caution that excessive sitting is akin to the health risks associated with smoking, stressing the importance of being mindful of habitual body postures.

Scientifically, incorporating frequent breaks, standing up, or moving around can alleviate the physical stress caused by extended sitting. An increase in complaints of back and neck pain has been observed among the younger age group, attributed to factors such as long commutes, extended hours of computer use without proper ergonomics, and uneven roads.

Health professionals note a shift in the predominant cause of back pain from disc-related issues to mechanical factors. Lifestyle modifications, muscle strengthening, and paying attention to ergonomics are advocated as more effective strategies than relying solely on medications.

"To address back pain concerns, lifestyle changes take precedence over medication, focusing on natural corrections. Strategies include weight management, a diet rich in calcium, and vitamin D, sun exposure, and muscle toning exercises. Ergonomic considerations for the workplace, including proper chairs and physiotherapy exercises, are crucial in preventing injuries. Emphasis is placed on bone health, often overlooked in India and Asian countries, with preventative measures recommended through muscle toning and nutritional supplements," said an expert.

For those working from home, experts stress the need for personalised ergonomic adaptations to match job demands with individual physical profiles. Consulting with an ergonomist and engaging in physical re-conditioning sessions with a rehabilitation specialist are encouraged to address the challenges posed by the new work-from-home setup.

Given the rising concerns about back pain, it is crucial to understand the various factors contributing to this issue. A health expert highlights the multifaceted nature of back and neck pain, categorising them broadly as mechanical, degenerative/age-related, or pathological. In the younger age group, mechanical back pain is a prevalent issue, often affecting those who engage in prolonged commutes on bikes or public transportation, navigate uneven roads, or spend extended hours working on computers without proper ergonomic setups.

Mechanical back pain is characterised by alterations in the biomechanics of the spine due to factors such as altered posture or the impact of uneven roads. The expert notes a significant shift in the nature of back pain cases, with a decrease in disc-related issues and an increase in mechanical back pain attributed to issues like long commutes. This shift highlights the evolving challenges faced by individuals in the modern lifestyle, emphasising the need for targeted interventions to address the changing patterns of back and neck pain.

Addressing the issue of back pain requires a holistic approach that goes beyond merely relying on medications. Lifestyle modifications play a pivotal role in naturally correcting the underlying factors contributing to back pain. For instance, individuals with excess weight in the lower abdomen are advised to focus on weight reduction to alleviate strain on their backs during long commutes. Additionally, adopting a diet rich in calcium, ensuring adequate vitamin D levels through sun exposure, and incorporating muscle toning exercises are recommended as essential components of a comprehensive back pain management strategy.

"The importance of ergonomics in preventing back pain cannot be overstated. Proper workplace ergonomics, including the use of suitable chairs, support for the arms, and shoulder rest, are crucial elements in maintaining a healthy posture. The expert advises against the use of armless chairs, emphasising their impact on neck muscles. Regular adjustments in the height of the chair contribute to activating different muscle groups during work, promoting a dynamic and supportive environment for the spine," said an expert.

For optimal adaptation to remote work challenges, consult with an ergonomist and engage in physical re-conditioning sessions with a rehabilitation specialist, added an expert.

ADVERTORIAL

Cracking the Code of Back and Neck Pain: Preventable !!, Manageable - conservative or surgical?

In the hustle and bustle of modern life, back and neck pain have become commonplace afflictions affecting people of all ages. Whether it's due to poor posture, sedentary lifestyles, or underlying health issues, these discomforts can significantly impact daily activities. The burning question on many minds is: Can they be prevented, treated, or do they always require surgery?

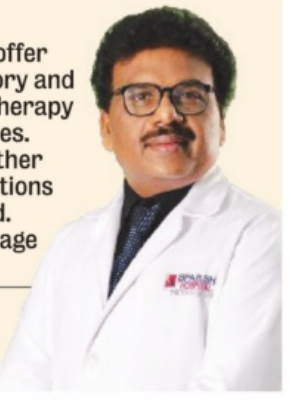
Prevention – The pillar of Pain - Free life.

Preventing back and neck pain often begins with a conscious effort to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Maintaining good posture, especially when sitting for extended periods, and incorporating regular exercise into one's routine can work wonders. Imagine your body as a finely tuned machine that requires regular maintenance. Strengthening core muscles and maintaining a healthy weight are additional measures that can alleviate strain on the spine. Exercises like Swimming, cycling and Yoga add to the spinal health.

Ergonomics, too, plays a pivotal role in both work and leisure settings. Simple adjustments like using supportive chairs, placing computer monitors at eye level, and taking frequent breaks to stretch can further mitigate the risk of chronic pain issues.

Treatment Options – Beyond the Knife

When pain strikes, various non-surgical treatments can offer relief. Medications like Muscle relaxants, anti-inflammatory and nerve soothing agents helps to alleviate the pain. Physiotherapy additionally offers relaxation and strengthening of muscles. Specific spinal exercises under expert guidance adds further relief. For those seeking a more targeted approach, injections such as epidurals or nerve blocks might be recommended. These interventions aim to reduce inflammation and manage pain without resorting to surgery.



Dr. Shivakumar S Kupanur
Senior Consultant, Neuro-spine Surgeon.
Head of Neurosciences- Sparsh Hospital, Yeshwantpur.

The Surgical Route – In selected cases.

Contrary to the belief that surgery is the inevitable endpoint for back and neck pain, it is, in fact, often considered a last resort. Surgical intervention is typically recommended when conservative treatments have proven ineffective or when there is clear evidence of structural issues requiring correction.

In selected cases, where there is a risk of neurological deficits and permeant damage, surgery gives wonderful outcomes. Conditions such as herniated discs, spinal stenosis, or certain spinal deformities with significant Neural compression may warrant surgical procedures.

A fear of post-surgical disability and complication is no more a reality with experienced Neuro-spine surgeon. Advancements in medical technology have led to minimally invasive options, reducing recovery times and minimizing complications associated with traditional surgeries.

The Tailored Approach

One crucial takeaway from the exploration of back and neck pain is the necessity of an individualized approach. Bodies vary, and what works for one person may not be the solution for another. Seeking professional medical advice is paramount to accurately diagnose the root cause and craft an effective treatment plan.

In essence, back and neck pain, though pervasive, need not be an enduring affliction. The path to a pain-free life involves a commitment to lifestyle changes, early intervention, and a willingness to explore a spectrum of treatment options. Surgery is not the inevitable destination; it's a consideration after thorough exploration of other viable avenues.

In Conclusion

Back and neck pain need not dictate the narrative of our lives. While they can be discomforting and sometimes debilitating, a proactive approach to prevention and a diverse range of non-surgical treatments can pave the way for a healthier, pain-free existence. Surgery, if required, should be viewed as a judiciously chosen tool in the toolkit of options. By prioritizing prevention, seeking timely medical advice, and exploring conservative treatments, individuals can reclaim control over their lives, stepping into a future free from the shackles of persistent pain.

For appointments call: 080 61 222 000

Metro extension proposal to give boost to Kanakapura Road

Kanakapura Road is one of the fastest growing areas in the city. As many are buying plots in and around the area, there is a demand for mass transport.

The Metro officials have said that an extension of the green line on the Kanakapura Road is in the pipeline and if all goes well, the Metro train which is currently terminating near the NICE junction may go all the way till Harohalli. If this happens, then it is a big boost as Harohalli is not only set to become a suburb for the city in years to come but also helps thousands of people who travel to Harohalli for the working in the factories located in the Harohalli industrial area.

An official said, "As per the Metro's ambitious plan, the purple line which is currently terminating at Challaghatta will be extended till Bidadi. Bidadi too is becoming a fast growing suburb of Benglauru. Even the BMTC buses are operating from Bidadi which is an indicator as to how Bidadi is now becomeing an extension of the city. On the other hand, there is a proposal to extend the green line which is currently terminating at BIEC to Nelamangala-Kunigal bypass road.

There is also a proposal to extend the Metro till Attibele. And the Tamil Nadu government is also showing keen interest in extending the Metro line from Hosur to Attibele that is on the Karnataka-Tamil Nadu border."

Realtors and experts say that the IT sector's substantial contributions to Bengaluru's growth, drawing significant investments domestically and internationally, have played a pivotal role. The city's allure, with numerous job prospects in renowned global companies, has prompted a significant influx of individuals relocating to Bengaluru.

The real estate sector in Bengaluru has reaped the benefits of expansive IT office clusters scattered across the city. These office hubs not only generate a demand for rental housing but also present lucrative income opportunities for homeowners residing in nearby residential areas. Many homeowners have strategically invested in upcoming realty projects within these areas. Realtors affirm that Bengaluru's appeal lies in its harmonious coexistence, irrespective of diverse backgrounds.

Bengaluru is also experiencing a tremendous influx of residents, which can mostly be divided into two segments. One segment consists of former residents who returned home because of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

The emerging neighborhoods are witnessing a surge in the development of essential amenities such as schools, hospitals, restaurants, and shopping complexes, tailored to meet the needs of the residents in these burgeoning areas. In terms of rental preferences, areas like Hebbal, Devanahalli, Yelahanka, Hennur Road, and Sarjapur Road are highly sought after by renters. Simultaneously, regions like Mysuru Road, Kadugodi, and Budigere Cross Road are experiencing an upward trajectory in demand, reflecting the city's overall growth and the diversified preferences of its residents.

Bengaluru is also experiencing a tremendous influx of residents, which can mostly be divided into two segments. One segment consists of former residents who returned home because of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

And the other segment consists of those migrating to the city for the first time. This 'Dual Migration' consists of young professionals, students, artists, and young families flooding the market with new tenants looking for rental accommodation in the city.

-Prakash VL

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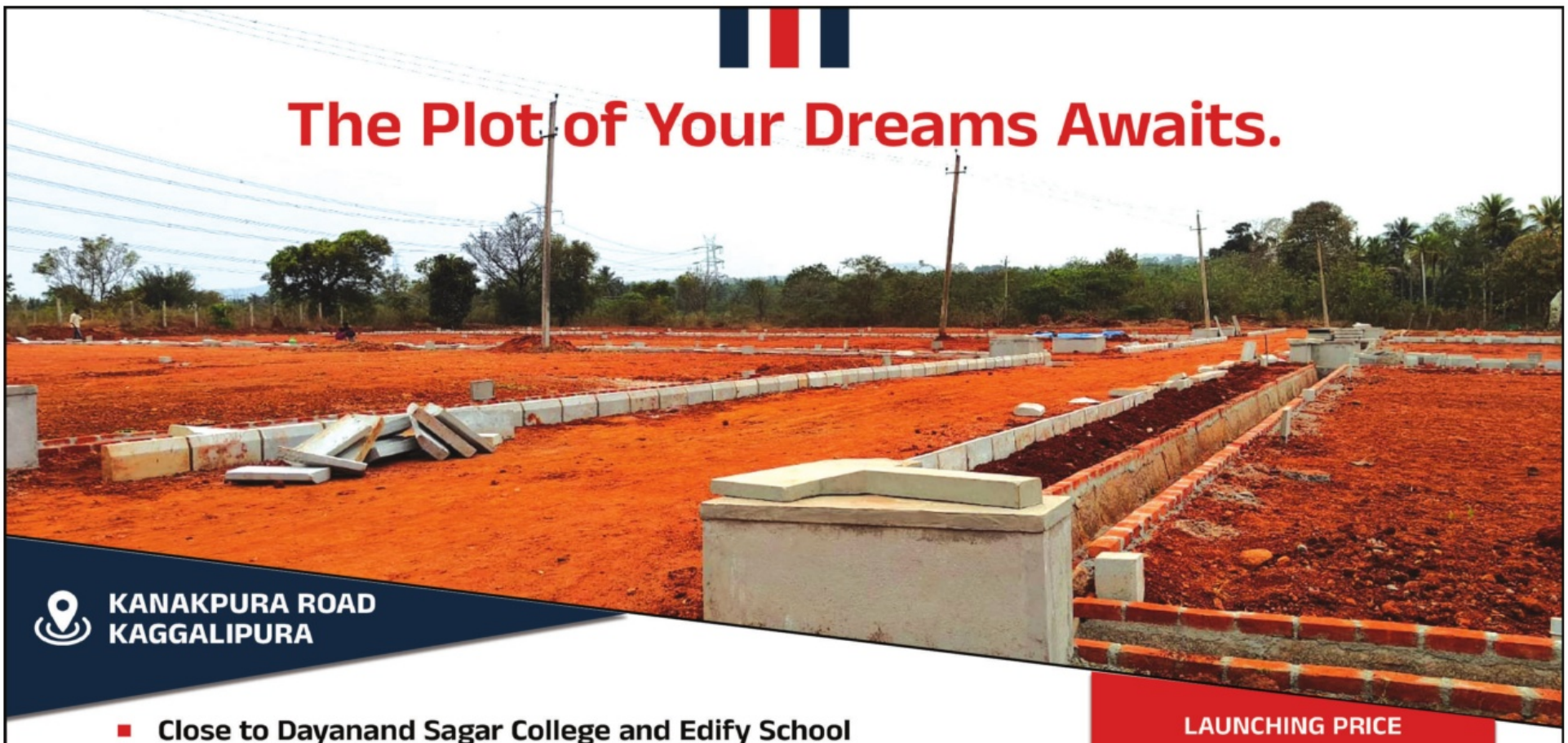

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Consumers in store for a power tariff shocker?

As Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited proposes substantial tariff hikes, consumers face higher costs, while political debates and a projected deficit of ₹1,738.70 crore add to mounting economic concerns

Sridhar Vivan
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TWEETS @sridharvMirror

In the aftermath of last year's power hike, many were taken aback by the drastic inflation in their electricity bills. The twist in the tale was the approval by the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) of a proposal by Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM), which involved charging a flat rate for consumers utilising more than 100 units, departing from the previous billing structure with varied price slabs for power usage. In 2024, brace yourselves for another surprise as BESCOM has now tabled a substantial tariff increase, leaving the decision on pricing in the hands of the KERC. Once KERC approves, the new hike may come into effect from April 1, 2024.

For example, until now, all the power consumers whose power bill runs to more than 101 units a month have had to pay Rs 7 per unit. Now, BESCOM wants this to be hiked to Rs 7.48. This means that if the pricing is done as per this proposal, there will be a big 'shock' for the power consumers. However, BESCOM has also proposed a hike for those who consume less than 100 units. Currently, these users who consume up to 100 units are paying Rs 4.75, and now BESCOM has demanded Rs 5.24 per unit.

Swathi Kiran, a homemaker, said, "These days, it is common to see a lot of gadgets and electrical appliances being used in homes. Even though the Energy Minister had earlier claimed that the average power consumption in the State was in the range of 52 to 53 units a month, in Bengaluru, it is common for a majority of people to have power consumption of more than 100 units a month. Hence, it is not right for BESCOM to charge a flat rate for all those who consume power more than 100 units a month. In fact, BESCOM has to bring back the old system where there are different slabs prior to 100 units with differential rates, and this can reduce the power bills further."

Currently, these users who consume up to 100 units are paying Rs 4.75, and now BESCOM has demanded Rs 5.24 per unit

The inflated power bills had even turned into a political slugfest. When the Congress government took over last year, many had questioned Energy Minister KJ George as to why the power bills were being inflated so much. George had then blamed the previous BJP Government, saying that the outgoing government had allowed the power hike and his government had nothing to do with it, which was denied by the former CM Basavaraj S Bommai. "George had earlier said that all the future power hikes would be absorbed and paid by the Government for those who were beneficiaries of the Gruha Jyoti scheme provided they were using their entitled units. Now, it is to be seen if the government sticks to the word or not," said Shivakumar B, a businessman.

In its submission to the KERC, BESCOM reports a fiscal year 2022-23 revenue deficit of Rs 1,059.75 crore, having collected only Rs 26,235.49 crore against the target of Rs 2,7295.24 crore. Anticipating a further shortfall in the next fiscal (2023-24), BESCOM projects the deficit to rise to Rs 1,738.70 crore, setting a revenue requirement target of Rs 34,897.16 crore against the estimated revenue receipts of Rs 33,158.47 crore.

BESCOM attributes the revenue deficit to a misalignment between the annual revenue requirement (ARR) and revenue receipts from the existing tariff structure. According to the APR, the projected average cost of power supply per unit surpasses the average rate of realisation. For the upcoming fiscal year, BESCOM estimates the average cost of power supply per unit to range around Rs 9.83, with a potential realisation of Rs 9.34, resulting in a deficit of 0.49 paise per unit. Consequently, BESCOM suggests that the projected deficit of Rs 1,738.70 crore could be mitigated through a tariff increase.

'Grate' expectations met as railway underpass issue resolved

Residents of Madhavnagar are expressing relief as the long-standing issue of the railway underpass gratings gains attention. Prakash Phirgal, Secretary of the Madhavnagar Residents' Welfare Association (RWA), acknowledged the positive developments, stating, "Finally, the railway underpass gratings issue got its due attention, and as I see, other co-residents have assessed the outcome rightly."

The positive news is that repairs have been successfully carried out on the eastern side of the railway bridge (flyover side), eliminating vibrations and putting an end to the shattering noise that had been causing distress to residents. As the fix was done by the civic body, the residents were surprised to see that there was no noise coming from the metal gratings.

However, on the western side of the railway bridge (Nehru Circle side), there remains a section of gratings that still requires attention. Prakash Phirgal suggests that while the concerned authorities may have made efforts, a specific portion may have been overlooked, urging swift action to address and repair this section. The urgency of the matter was underscored by a recent article in the Bangalore Mirror, drawing attention to the situation at Shivananda Circle. Residents highlighted that one side of the gratings is cracked and damaged, with some sections even breaking off due to a flawed design.

Vehicles passing over these metal gratings have been generating loud noises, impacting residents in close proximity. While a temporary fix has provided some relief, residents are keenly aware that a more permanent solution is needed to mitigate the ongoing disruptions.

A resident said, "The issue was lying unattended for several months, and finally, after the article, now we see some relief. Although it is a temporary fix, we see some change and development that has happened. We want sustained attention from the authorities to comprehensively address the remaining issues on the western side and implement measures to rectify the flawed design. The community looks forward to a resolution that ensures a peaceful living environment for all." — BMB

BangaloreMirror
At Cantonment Railway Station, Shivananda Circle loose metal gratings on road are posing danger to motorists
GRATE-FULL DEAD
Issue unattended for 6 months despite complaints to BBMP

BM's report on December 25, 2023 about the damaged metal gratings on Shivananda Circle

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Fallen pole
RT Nagar

A year ago, an electric pole fell, and a crane was arranged to move it off the road on 12th Cross, RT Nagar, 1st Block. It is considered a dangerous area after dark.

Shabby kiosks
Victoria Road

The traffic police kiosks at Victoria Road are in deplorable condition.

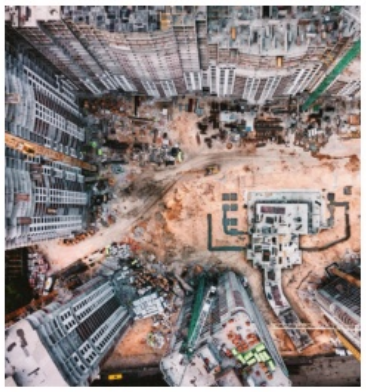
Ignored footpath
RT Nagar

On RT Nagar's 80 ft main road, behind Vinayaka Temple, the footpath has been dug up and remains unfixed by BBMP authorities. This issue has been unattended for the last 10-12 months.

Airport boost to Nelamangala real estate sector

The shift of Bengaluru airport from HAL to Devanahalli (Kempegowda International Airport) changed the infrastructure growth, as north Bengaluru has turned out to be one of the fastest developing areas in the city. Now, the State Government has proposed Bengaluru's second airport to be near Tumakuru, which is set to shift the focus towards north-west Bengaluru, and areas around Nelamangala and Tumakuru are set for significant growth.

On Thursday, Home Minister G Parmeshwara said that the government was seriously considering a second airport between Tumakuru and Sira. He mentioned that as Kempegowda International Airport was experiencing a surge in airport travellers, the government was considering a second airport, and there were plans to have it near Tumakuru. The



Nelamangala-Tumakuru region was growing fast.

Moreover, the Tumakuru area was an industrial hub with nine significant industrial areas. This was also part of the Chennai Bengaluru-Mumbai Industrial corridor project. For the new airport, the government had identified 8,000 acres of land near Tumakuru, Sira, Madhugiri, and Koratagere taluks.

Sources said that as cities were growing, aviation traffic was soaring, and so was the need for a second airport. This was the reason why a new airport was being built at Navi Mumbai to cater to Mumbai traffic, Jewar airport as a second airport for Delhi, and Parandur airport as a second airport for Chennai.

"Today, north Bengaluru is one of the most sought-after areas, commanding higher rental.

A number of infrastructure projects have come up. So, we can see the clear shift. Earlier, it was Infrastructure Minister MB Patil, and now Home Minister G Parameshwara have spoken of the airport near Tumakuru.

So, if we look at the current geography, Nelamangala is the gateway either for Bengaluru from other parts of the city or for the proposed airport at Tumakuru.

As now more and more people are settling down near Devanahalli so that they can travel to the airport easier, many would shift in the future to Nelamangala as it would be easier for them to travel to the new airport as well as the industrial area. This would clearly mean that the property in and around Nelamangala is set to get a big boost. So, I would say that it is the right time to invest in property in and around Nelamangala to get higher returns in the future," said Dayananda Babu, a realtor.

Metro boost to Magadi Road

Meanwhile, many affordable plots coming up near Magadi road have got a Metro boost. There is likely to be forward movement in Metro phase three this year. One among the corridors in phase three is the Hosahalli to Kadabagere (12.50 km). Vasanth Murthy, a realtor, said, "If the Metro work is completed, then it will be easier for those staying in Magadi road to travel to core areas of the city or other parts with the Metro network. Apart from this, the Bengaluru-Magadi road is being four-laned, and even the Sunkadakatte-Kamakshipalya road is also being widened. The BMTC is also operating buses on the NICE road, and this is helping the residents to travel on the NICE road between Tumakuru, Mysuru, Kanakapura, Bannerghatta, and Hosur roads. Overall, this will be a big boon for those who are eyeing properties." **–Prakash VL**

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORYBEHINDTHEPHOTO

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

Their usual pool of water having dried out, ducks were waddling in search of a new source

The picture was clicked by BM reader **T Prakash**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com**

Water scarcity hits these areas hard

Residents of 30 layouts in Horamavu, and more urge Deputy CM to promptly implement underground pipeline

Sridhar Vivan
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TWEETS @sridharvMirror

The residents of 30 layouts in Horamavu, Kalkere, and Ramamurthy Nagar have submitted a plea to Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, urging the immediate installation of an underground pipeline. In their memorandum, the residents expressed their concerns, stating that in these 11 villages, there are about 250 revenue layouts and approximately 48,000 residential buildings, including single, multi-dwelling, and apartments.

"New construction and residential density have significantly increased post-covid, leading to a 'Red Zone' designation due to the overexploitation of groundwater. The water table has depleted, with 80% of public borewells dried out and new borewells yielding no water even at depths of 1,500 feet. Out of 650 public borewells, almost 400 are dry, and the rest are barely surviving," they said.

Residents said that out of 650 public borewells, almost 400 are dry, and the rest are barely surviving

Residents now heavily rely on private tankers, which are becoming more expensive with longer waiting times due to rising demand. With inadequate rains, their water situation is heading towards a severe crisis that needs urgent attention. Residents added that UGD pipelines covering 3,800 roads spanning 480 km were laid in these wards in 2017–18, proposing water supply in 2020.

Kochu Sankar, Citizen Volunteer, Trinity Enclave RWA and KR Puram RWAs Collective told Bangalore Mirror that due to pressures from the then officials, who refused to

> **"The water table has depleted, with 80% of public borewells dried out**
> – residents

cover the dug-up roads without taking connections, they took a Cauvery connection in 2019, paying significant charges with the expectation of receiving Cauvery water soon.

"Since 2020, we have been closely following up for water and were given multiple timelines (10 dates) every time, which were not met. As per our understanding, the main trunk line work from TK Halli has to be completed, and water needs to reach OMBR GLR (14 MLD). A few days ago, BWSSB extended the deadline from March 24 to May 24. After this, testing and fixing of valves along 480 km of ward delivery lines need to be put on trial and testing (6 months)," he said.

However, UGD service, for which pipelines were laid in our layouts in 2018, is also yet to start. "We understand that UGD implementation is held up due to unresolved private land access issues to the STP near Kalkere Lake, and STP construction near Rampura Lake is progressing slowly. Hence, we have requested the Bengaluru in-charge minister to assess the progress," he added.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Nageshvara temple complex in Begur has two shrines that were commissioned during the rule of the Western Ganga Dynasty Kings Nitimarga I and Ereyappa Nitimarga II who ruled as early as in the 9th Century. The Western Ganga was an important ruling dynasty of ancient Karnataka in India which lasted from about 350 to 1000 CEThere is an old Kannada inscription dated c890, that describes a Bengaluru war. This inscription was discovered in this temple complex by the epigraphist R Narasimhachar. This is said to be the earliest evidence of the existence of a place called Bengaluru. There are other shrines too at this temple, but they are said to be of a later day from the time of the rule of the Chola Dynasty, Hoysala Dynasty and Vijayanagara Empire over the region.

GET HEARD WITH MIRROR

9591233247

Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

TAPTHECHATTER

where Bengalureans speak their mind

What do you think are the biggest infra issues Bengaluru can face in the coming year and what can be done about them?

Dankan N, BM Reader
For me, the concern lies not in questioning but in implementing the right practices for garbage disposal. It's crucial to adopt effective waste management strategies that prioritise environmental sustainability.

Priyantika, BM Reader
Bengaluru grapples with water scarcity and declining water quality due to urbanisation, pollution, and unsustainable groundwater extraction. Addressing this crisis necessitates an approach, integrating sustainable practices.

Meera, BM Reader
In my experience, water scarcity appears to be a significant concern. To address this issue, it's imperative to explore sustainable water management practices and promote responsible water usage.

Aditya, BM Reader
The issue of open trash collection at certain locations demands urgent attention from BBMP. To tackle this problem effectively, the BBMP should conduct a thorough assessment and implement waste management strategies.

Vivek Pillay, BM Reader
Water scarcity and pollution are pressing environmental concerns in cities worldwide, and Bengaluru is no exception. By acknowledging these issues, we can work towards implementing sustainable water management practices.

Riya, BM Reader
The lakes in Bengaluru, integral to the city's beauty, face pollution in certain areas. It is crucial for the BBMP to take proactive measures to preserve and restore these lakes.

SPEAK TO US

Does the Green City of India tag fit Bengaluru?

If you want to be featured in this section, mail us your answer to this question, in 25 words, with 'Tap The Chatter' in the subject line. Mail us with your name, occupation & a picture at mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com or WhatsApp us on 9591233247

Birds of a weather

IISc team studies effects of logging, climate change on bird communities in tropical mountains and stresses on need to guard primary forests

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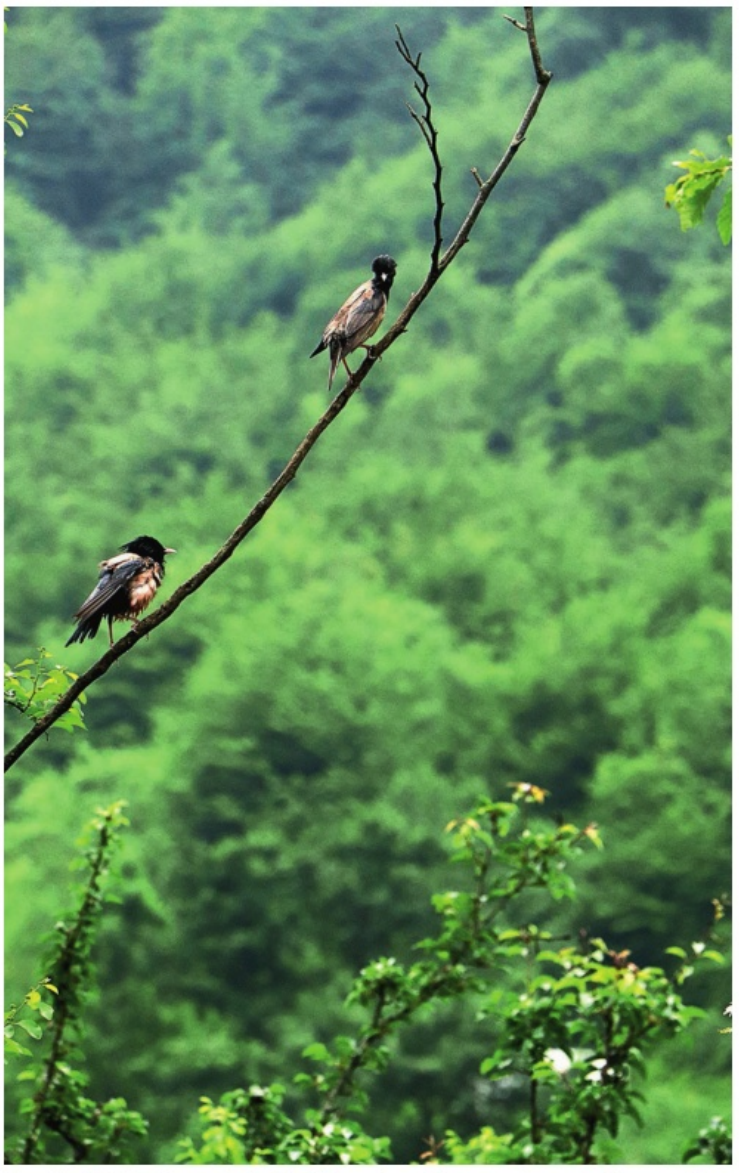
Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have studied the effects of forest logging and climate change on bird communities in tropical mountains, by examining over 10 years of data.

In a study published in Global Ecology and Conservation, the IISc team used mist netting and bird ringing data to answer how the composition of the mid-elevation Eastern Himalayan understory bird community changed in primary (undisturbed) forests as well as in logged forests.

The analysis was conducted on 4,801 insect-eating birds that live under the canopy of large trees, belonging to about 61 species. Data was collected from the Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary, Arunachal Pradesh, situated in Eastern Himalayas and home to over 500 bird species. The area saw intensive logging until 2002, and the logged regions have major differences compared to intact forests, making them ideal for the study.

The team found that many bird species have shifted to higher elevations due to rising temperatures. Logged forests have higher average temperatures and lower humidity than primary forests, thus hastening the transition. Additionally, birds that are smaller in size seem to colonise these logged forests better because they can tolerate higher temperatures. In contrast, the density of larger bird species appears to be increasing in the primary forests.

Researchers found that logging can lead to the loss of large-bodied, old growth-dependent species, and decrease the overall biodiversity. Understorey insectivores, which are often found only in specific niches, are negatively influenced by logging and show steep declines in numbers. Logged forests also have lower densities of foliage-dwelling insects, reducing the resource availability for the birds. Since large species have higher energy requirements, this disproportionately reduces the abundance of large species.



Smaller birds stay on in logged forests as they can bear hotter weather

> **Birds along with much of the flora and fauna of tropical mountain ranges are extremely temperature sensitive and are responding to global heating rapidly**
>
> –Umesh Srinivasan, CES

Find their niche

"Tropical montane forests are critical centers of biodiversity. In tropical mountains, each species has a particular niche where it is found. This restriction creates much more diversity in a small space," explained Ritobroto Chanda, former project associate at the Centre for Ecological Sciences (CES), IISc, and corresponding author of the study.

Experts say forest loss and climate change present major threats to these ecosystems. "Birds along with much of the flora and fauna of tropical mountain ranges are extremely temperature-sensitive and are responding to global heating rapidly. Also, most of the world's terrestrial biodiversity is concentrated in tropical mountains," says Umesh Srinivasan, assistant professor at CES and another author. However, very few studies have explored the joint influence of these threats.

The study highlights the need to safeguard primary forests to mitigate climate change's effects. "Logging managers should ensure that undisturbed forests across large elevational gradients are protected. If species encounter degraded forest while they shift upwards, certain species will most likely go locally extinct," said Srinivasan.

KSRTC to lease out its land for fuel stations

Fuel pumps part of KSRTC's revenue idea

Melvin Mathew
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

In an attempt to generate non-fare revenue, Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation is planning to lease out land to set up fuel outlets. A tender has been floated for 33 locations inviting bidders.

The land will be leased out to public sector undertaking (PSU) oil marketing companies in the 17 districts where KSRTC has administrative jurisdiction. KSRTC has floated a tender for establishing, operation and maintenance of the fuel stations. They can also install CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) stations and electrical power charging stations for e-vehicles and also provide amenities like a food court, ATM etc., in the proposed locations subject to availability of space and due permission of KSRTC.

"We are planning to lease out 10,000 sq feet of land to PSU oil marketing companies. These are vacant land adjacent to depots or other assets owned by KSRTC. The PSUs will provide a monthly licensing fee. The contract period will be for 10 years," said a senior KSRTC official.

KSRTC has already leased out 10 locations and is estimated to generate up to Rs 2 crore revenue per year.

Currently, KSRTC has proposed locations mostly outside Bengaluru that include Nelamangala depot, Vijayapura proposed depot, Sidlaghatta Depot, Gudibande Proposed Depot, Holalkere, Basapura Gate, Banavaara BS, Arasikere Depot, Koppa Proposed Depot, Mudigere Depot, Tarikere Proposed Depot, Channagiri Proposed Depot, Channarayapatna BS, Regional Training centre (Ring road), Hassan, Central Bus Stand, Srinivaspura new bus station, KGF Bus station, Udupi Depot, Vijayanagar Depot, HD Kote Depot, Bherya (Near Bus Stand) and others.

The licensee will have to provide a brick masonry compound wall of required height along the RTC boundary at their own cost. In case, the sites abut the bus depot, the height of the compound wall shall be of minimum seven feet. The monthly licensing fee will be increased by 5 per cent after three years.

23-year-old attempts suicide on Metro tracks

Metro services on a section of the Green line came to a temporary halt when a 23-year-old man, attempting suicide, jumped onto the tracks. Fortunately, the train's loco pilot swiftly applied the brakes, the power connection was promptly snapped, and the vigilant staff rescued him, shifting him to the hospital, where he is currently undergoing treatment in the ICU.

According to sources, the young man, originally from Alappuzha, Kerala, was employed in Abbigere. Reports indicate that the youth fell onto a 750 KV power line, which electrified him, as it was adjacent to the track. Allegedly, he handed over his phone to a friend before attempting suicide. A BMRCL official provided details, stating, "The First Information Report of the incident was recorded at 7:12 p, at Jalahalli Metro Station. A passenger waiting at the platform's end jumped in front of the arriving train at Jalahalli Metro Station. The BMRCL staff promptly responded, rescuing the injured individual and transporting them to a nearby hospital for further treatment. As a result of this incident, four trains were temporarily halted at other station platforms, and all commuters were safely evacuated. Operations on the Green Line were temporarily suspended between Yeshwantpur and Silk Institute Metro Stations during this period. Normalcy was restored on the entire Green Line at 8 pm." **BMB**

Govt's aim: Millets in every plate

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday announced the use of millets in Indira Canteens -- a state-run food subsidisation programme -- and mid-day meals for school children at an event in Bengaluru.

The Chief Minister was speaking after inaugurating the Millets and Organic International Trade Fair 2024 and the Exhibition and sales organized by the Department of Agriculture at the Palace Grounds in Bengaluru on Friday.

CM Siddaramaiah announced that a meeting of the concerned departments will be convened soon to discuss and decide on the use of millet at Indira canteens and school meals so that the people and school children of the state could become healthier.

The CM also assured that the state government will set up a centre for the promotion of millet crops to facilitate the production of high-quality millet seeds, the development of new varieties and the export of millets.

"Millets can be grown even in places where rainfall and fertility are low. Millets are very helpful for good health," he said. **ANI**

Garbage pile-ups, burning worsen air quality

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and out of this, only10% of waste gets recycled. We have realised this is mainly due to unsegregated waste, lack of infrastructure, and awareness among citizens.

There is a huge gap between the citizens and awareness around waste management. To ensure a cleaner city for our well-being, it is imperative that as responsible citizens we initiate the process of waste segregation at source instead of dumping it in open spaces and burning it," said Chiku Agarwal of Jhatkaa.

According to officials from the solid waste management (SWM) department of the BBMP, regular patrolling has been happening to control indiscriminate littering, setting garbage piles on fire, and similar offences. Data provided by the department showed that between 2019 and 2023, over 11 lakh cases under various SWM offences have been booked by the civic agency, and over Rs 29 crore has been generated in penalties.

Officials further noted that while BBMP marshals are patrolling the city regularly and penalising such violations, citizens' cooperation is a must.

"We have been coordinating with the Jhatkaa.org team and attending to all complaints of blackspots and garbage piles set on fire that are being raised on 'namma clean-Bengaluru' app. Earlier, some cases of waste piles set on fire by BBMP staff itself had also come to light.

However, they have been sensitised about this issue. Regular night patrolling by marshals has been happening and the number of blackspots in the city has reduced considerably.

The remaining spots are mostly on the outskirts where systematic garbage collection is not in place. Although marshals have been fining people for littering, citizen cooperation is the only way to bring the number of blackspots in the city to zero," said a BBMP official from the SWM department.

Upkeep of park, statue in question

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

nab the people responsible for damaging the decorative lights," said Prabhakar.

The 11-feet Queen Victoria statue which is set to turn 118 years old on February 5 was inaugurated by the Prince of Wales, George Frederick Ernest Albert on February 5, 1906.

The Indian National Trust for Arts and Cultural Heritage organised a heritage walk last year. However, the authorities concerned remained apathetic towards the maintenance of the park around the Queen Victoria statue.

Paver blocks from a portion of the pathway were removed long ago but no effort was made to develop the pathway despite construction materials being kept along the pathway for quite some time. One can see a heap of pavers on the pathway around the Queen Victoria statue.

"The Mysore Maharaja Krishna Raja Wadiyar IV contributed money for the installation of the Queen Victoria statue. It is the responsibility of the BBMP and state horticulture department to maintain the park. The authorities must develop and maintain it as a public plaza," said Nagaraj K, a visitor. Meanwhile, horticulture department deputy director (Cubbon Park) Pavithra said efforts are being made to replace defunct bulbs of decorative lights. When informed about damaged decorative lights, Pavithra said that she would look into the matter.

"Please send the pictures of damaged decorative lights. I am not aware of the damage. I will take measures to replace the lights," she said.

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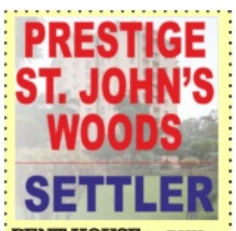

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Harisha Kempanna Gowda S/o Kempanna Residing at No.12/2, 2nd Cross, Dattatreya Badavane, K G Nagar, Bangalore, Karnataka - 560019 have changed my name from Kempanna Harisha Gowda to Harisha Kempanna Gowda vide affidavit dated 4.01.2024 Sworn Before Notary Onkarappa.N.R, Bengaluu.

I, Amarnath Anashetty S/o Maruti Anashetty residing at No.520, Khajuri, Po Khajuri, Dist Kalaburagi, Karnataka - 585314 have changed my name from Amarnath to Amarnath Anashetty vide affidavit dated 22/12/2023 sworn before Notary Y.R.Chandrasekar, Blr

I, Latha , W/o Balasubramaniam M,FD2 Taj regency #38 7th main 12th cross btm 2nd stage opp to Indira canteen, Bangalore 560076 Have changed my name to LATHA V for all future purposes.

I, Kalpesh Vasa, S/o Niranjan Vasa, R/o# 371,Ranka Nest apt,KKS Road,Okalipuram, Bengaluru-560021 have changed my name from Kalpesh N Vasa to Kalpesh Vasa for all future purposes

I, Chetan Kumar T S S/o Suresh Gowda C R/o 25, Munisonnegowda layout, Thanisandra main Rd , Bengaluru 560077 have changed my name to CHETHANKUMAR T S affidavit Dt.05/01/2024 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Subramanyam Cancelore Subramanyam R/o No.305, Gurumohanam Apts, LG enclave, Nanjappa circle, Vidyranyapura, Bengaluru 560027 have changed my name to Subramani Cancelore affidavit Dt.04/01/2024 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, THIMMA REDDY HOSAMANI residing at No.11, 1st Floor, 2nd Cross, Near Reddy Estate, Anchepalya, Nagasandra, Bengaluru-560073 have changed my name to THIMMA REDDY HOSAMANI MALLIKARJUNA REDDY, vide affidavit dated 03.01.2024 before notary V. Anjanappa, B.lore.

I, ROMEO FERNANDEZ R/at No.62, Chandra Nilaya 3rd Cross, N Beerappa Road Ramaswamy Palya Bangalore-560033, have changed my name to ROMEO FRAANICS FERNANDEZ vide affidavit dated: 4/1/2024 Before Notary S.R.Nanjunda Swamy Bangalore.

I, SUBHA A R/at Flat No.302, 3rd Floor Chowriappa Constillation Apartment Hennur Main Road Kothanur Bangalore- 560077, have changed my name to MOLIA SUBRAMANIAN vide affidavit dated: 4/1/2024 Before Notary S.R.Nanjunda Swamy Bangalore.

I, Priyanka W/o Anil Kumar Solanki, R/o 307 Radiant Pearl Apartment 10th Cross Manjunath Layout Munekolala Marathahalli Bangalore-560037 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Priyanka Kayth.

I, MALINGA, Residing at Molekoppalu Grama, Kambadahalli Post, Basaralu Hobli, Mandya. Have changed My name to RAMALINGA vide affidavit dated 25/05/2023 before Notary L. Puttaraju Bangalore

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HEALTH TIP: Capsicum is rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants and can be added to daily meals

Guava leaf extract may reduce the pain intensity of menstrual cramps

SELECTIVE MUTISM DECODED

All about anxiety disorder that makes kids go silent in specific social situations

Belle* is six years old. Like many children, she is a playful and often boisterous child at home with her family. Unlike many children, she has an anxiety disorder which renders her speechless and often physically frozen in specific situations such as school or when she is out with her family.

This affects her ability to join class activities and make friends at school. Other typical childhood experiences, such as attending birthday parties or joining in after-school activities, prove to be challenging for her.

Belle has selective mutism, which affects about one in 140 children under the age of eight years.

Selective mutism is an anxiety disorder characterised by a consistent pattern of silence in specific social situations where speech is expected (for example, at school or work) while the person is able to speak comfortably in other situations (such as at home with close family).

To receive a diagnosis, this pattern must persist for over a month and cannot be explained by another communication or psychiatric condition. This lack of speech affects the person's education, friendships and work.

Selective mutism usually starts between two to five years. Although the condition becomes less common in adolescence and adulthood, if left untreated, it has a significant effect on the person's mental health, wellbeing and life opportunities as an adult.

No one cause

There is no one cause of selective mutism. Instead, it is developed by the interaction of several risk factors such as the person's genes, temperament, brain development and environment. So each person with selective mutism is different.

In 2011, researchers at the University of California found that the same gene linked to autism, language impairment and anxiety traits is also associated with selective mutism. Parents often report a family history of anxiety or communication difficulties, which supports this.

Children with selective mutism often display what is known as a "behavioural inhibition" temperament. People with this temperament tend to show fear and avoidance of new people, situations and objects. These children often avoid taking risks, which can hinder progress during treatment, since social communication and interaction involve taking risks.

Studies have also shown a high occurrence of communication difficulties, autism and developmental delays in the people with selective mutism.

Researchers have suggested that some children's lack of speech may be reinforced by significant people in their environment, such as family members and teachers.

The authors of The Selective Mutism Resource Manual, used by many therapists in the UK, suggest that when these significant people pressure the child to speak or allow communication avoidance, they are maintaining a selective mutism environment.

In Belle's situation, there were two parts to her treatment for selective mutism. The first part was a systems approach, which addressed the environmental factors that maintained the selective mutism.

The systems approach involved training her parents and teachers about selective mutism and how to support her communication in everyday situations. They were asked to adapt their communication styles with her to take away the pressure for speaking and yet create opportunities for her to communicate verbally and non-verbally.

They were also asked to address any situation where people put pressure on her to speak (for example, school dinner staff insisting she speak to order her food) or where she was criticised for not speaking (for example, grandparents saying that she was rude).

The second part of Belle's treatment used a behavioural approach involving a small steps exposure and reward programme. The exposure technique used in the programme was "sliding in", also known as stimulus fading.

During a sliding-in session, Belle and her mother comfortably played and talked in a room at school. The year one class teacher who had never heard Belle's voice was introduced in small steps to the activity while Belle remained comfortable enough to continue talking. The small steps progressed from Belle using her voice in front of her teacher to eventually speaking to her.

Belle continued to make progress by slowly introducing new people in different situations. She was involved in every step of the treatment, which helped her feel more confident and in control of her anxiety.

My colleagues and I systematically reviewed the literature on selective mutism treatments without medication. We found that children who received treatments using a combined systems and behavioural approach, similar to Belle's experience, made significant improvements in their speaking behaviour than those who had no treatment. These treatments involved a therapist, parent, teacher or camp counsellor, and the child.

In Belle's case, she was talking to children in the local park within a year of starting the treatment. She was contributing to class discussions and being her playful and boisterous self in the school playground. And she started making friends in her local gymnastics club.

(By Gino Hipolito, University of Oxford, The Conversation)

> **The condition becomes less common in adolescence and adulthood, but if left untreated, it may impact a person's mental health, wellbeing and life opportunities**

All you need to know about...

Fatigue in long covid

Biological cause
Persistent fatigue in patients with long covid has a biological cause, namely mitochondria in muscle cells that produce less energy than in healthy individuals, a study has found.

What are mitochondria
Mitochondria are membrane-bound cell organelles that generate most of the chemical energy needed to power the cell's biochemical reactions.

Changes in muscle
"We're seeing clear changes in the muscles in these patients," said Michele van Vugt, a professor at Amsterdam UMC in The Netherlands.
People with long covid can have a wide range of symptoms that can last weeks, months, or even years after infection.

Post-exertional malaise
A total of 25 long covid patients and 21 healthy control participants took part in the study. They were asked to cycle for 15 minutes. This cycling test caused a long-term worsening of symptoms in people with long covid, called post-exertional malaise (PEM). Extreme fatigue occurs after physical, cognitive, or emotional exertion beyond an unknown, individual threshold. The researchers looked at the blood and muscle tissue one week before the cycling test and one day after the test.

Low on energy
"We saw various abnormalities in the muscle tissue of the patients. At the cellular level, we saw that the mitochondria of the muscle, also known as the energy factories of the cell, function less well and that they produce less energy," said Rob Wust, Assistant Professor at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU).
"So, the cause of the fatigue is really biological. The brain needs energy to think. Muscles need energy to move," added van Vugt.

—PTI

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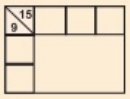
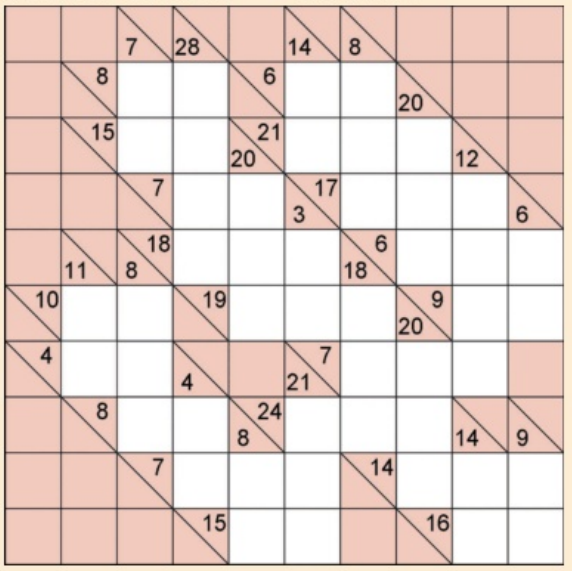
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

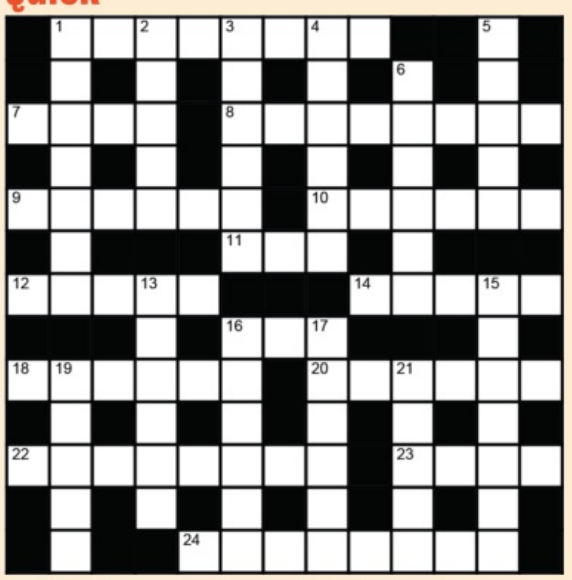


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Summarised or recapitulated, in a way? (6,2)
7 Very serious (4)
8 Mumbai's ___ Art Gallery (8)
9 Accommodation for a farm animal (3-3)
10 ___ seeds : peas, beans, etc.? (6)
11 The sun (3)
12 Rubbish; nonsense (5)
14 Absolute (5)
16 Fuel Sys. Controller (3)
18 Sudden feeling of excitement (6)
20 Accost and attack (6)
22 Mexican savoury pie (8)
23 Almonds, cashews, etc (4)
24 Spree; adventure (8)

DOWN

1 More bad-tempered (7)
2 Acts with gestures without words (5)
3 Has a good time? (6)
4 An ___ task : a difficult job? (6)
5 Poppy product (5)
6 Chesspiece (6)
13 Relating to the backbone (6)
15 Biblical letter (7)
16 Stays on the water (6)
17 Winter melon (6)
19 Tourist destination which used to be the capital of the Vijayanagar Empire (5)
21 ___ Claus : Father Christmas? (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: K EQUALS G

AJACVZEWPK RAGHOAX L SWZZSA QWMMACAPZ LX XHHP LX WZ WX XUHYAP HFZ SHFQ.

Linemaro

Let's never stop looking at each other

Mindchow

It is great wealth to a soul to live frugally with a contented mind

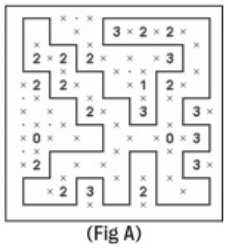
Joke of the day

The depressing thing about tennis is that no matter how much I play, I'll never be as good as a wall. I played a wall once. They're relentless

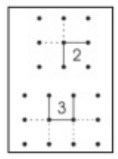
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

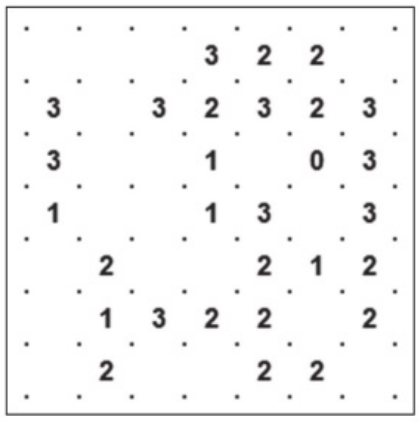


(Fig B) Not Allowed

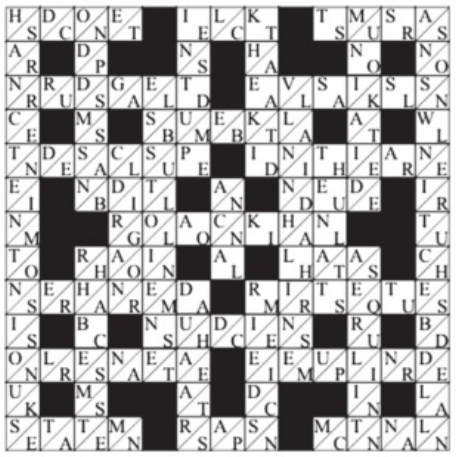
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5 M
6				
7				
8				
9				

ACROSS

1 Crams; 6 Ochre; 7 Grins; 8 I noun; 9 No Ben

DOWN

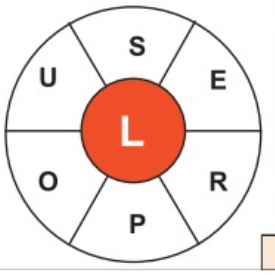
1 Curbs; 2 Con hi; 3 Inn or; 4 Orang; 5 Neems

Mensapuzzle

What number should replace the question mark?

7	6	5	7	6	3
4	9	2	8	1	9
1	3	7	3	2	7
3	8	4	9	9	5
5	4	2	3	2	?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

16 Average; 18 Good; 20 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	4						1	
			3	6	2			
5		2		7		9		6
7		8				1		2
			2		8			
9		1				8		3
6		3		8		4		1
			6	5	1			
	1						6	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 16

1 2 5 8

Medium = 45

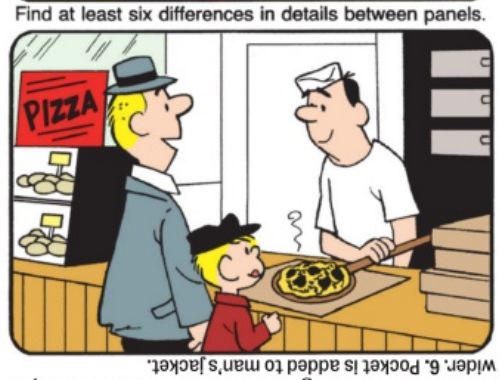
3 5 7 7

Hard = 16

3 5 6 5

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



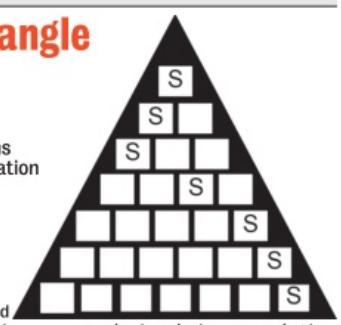
Differences: 1. Arm is moved. 2. Cap is reversed. 3. Oven door is missing. 4. Ear is smaller. 5. Counter top is wider. 6. Pocket is added to man's jacket.

Riddler

Which former U.S. President might be an ALBINAL MONARCH?

Alpha triangle

1 Curved letter
2 Thus
3 Tippler
4 Lion's share
5 Large publications
6 Public transportation Systems
7 Patrons, guides



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Redeye by Mel Casson

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

FIRST INNING ROOKIES
THIS SHOW HAS TOP-TIER COSTUME DESIGN. IT'S TOO BAD THEY'RE ALWAYS GETTING RIPPED AND DIRTY FROM THE GAME.
THAT'S PART OF THE FUN!
WHERE'S THE FUN IN LAUNDRY?

Crankshaft

CRANKSHAFT HAS PUT WOOD INTO HIS FIREPLACE!
AND NOW HE'S PACKING NEWSPAPER OVER, UNDER AND AROUND THE GRATE!
WE SHOULD BE GETTING THE CALL ANY SECOND NOW!
10-17
tombatiuk.com/books

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you may be happy and blessed by the moon. You may feel healthy, which may reflect in your way of working. You may perform well in all areas of life, improving your prestige. Your concentration may be very good today, allowing you to make some difficult decisions in your business for growth.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, you may feel dull, and your focus may be lost towards your targets. You may hypothetically make some decisions that seem beyond reality. Your expectations may be very high, and due to impatience, you may not fulfil them, leaving you upset. You are advised to be careful in adventure tours and rush driving.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today, your past investments may give you good profits. You may get good results after an easy task, and obstacles may be removed. Your financial status may improve, with new sources of income. Couples may hear good news regarding kids, and you may find success easily.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you may feel happy, and the time may be favourable. You may make important decisions in business that could bring benefits shortly. You may get rewarded, increasing your prestige in society. You may also meet an influential person.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, you may be happy and have good patience, reflecting on your way of working. You may complete tasks efficiently and plan to visit a religious place. Making donations to religious places or charities is also indicated. Love birds may develop trust in their relationship, and you may be able to control your opponents.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you may feel unhappy and dull, affecting your way of working and causing delays in project completion. This may impact your prestige in both professional and domestic life. It is advised to avoid adventure tours or rush driving. Love birds may experience a breakup, and job seekers may be disappointed in terms of finding a new job.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you may feel positive vibrations around you, and things are under control. You may plan to start a new business in partnership and expect some long-distance travel. Building faith with your spouse may bring harmony to your domestic life.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, you may perform your best in the office and have a good bond with your boss. New responsibilities may be given in terms of promotions. Chronic health issues may be cured, and you may receive good incentives for your work. Sibling disputes may be resolved, and job seekers may find new jobs.

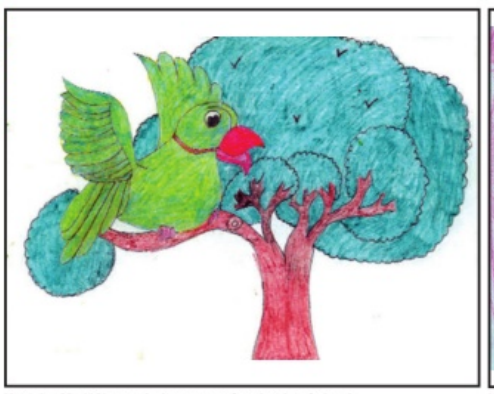
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, kids' education may keep you busy, and you may plan for their higher studies. Couples may receive good news regarding children. Thinking about updating your skills and planning for higher studies for job promotion is also indicated. Singles may find their soul mate. Natives in education, consulting, and banking may fare well.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, you may feel dissatisfied and may struggle to take on responsibilities. Your investments may result in some losses. It is advised to carefully read documents before putting in your signature. Elderly health issues may upset you, and plans to reconstruct your house are recommended to be postponed for a while.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, disputes with siblings may be settled, boosting your relationship with them. Your vitality seems good, aiding in the completion of difficult projects easily. Expanding your network after a short work-related trip is likely. Helping a needy person may increase your social status.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today, you may be busy with your family, enjoying time with them. Expectations of new sources of income may boost your financial health. Controlling expenditures on unnecessary items is advised. Purchasing worthwhile things may increase your social status.

KIDZONE



Kavitha M, 11 Years, Indiranagar Cambridge School

Nureen, 5 Years, Baldwin Girls High School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
= (10!+11×10!+12×11×10!) / (10! × 4!)
= 10!(1+11+12×11) / (4!×2×1)
= (1+11+12×11) / (4×2×1)
= 144 / 24 = 6

RIDDLER
Abraham Lincoln

FAST FIVE

S	C	R	A	M
C	H	O	R	E
R	I	N	G	S
U	N	I	O	N
B	O	N	N	E

QUOTE UNCODE
Everything becomes a little different as soon as it is spoken out loud.

STRIKE OUT

S	T	E	N	S	A	S	M	T	N	L				
U	M	T	D			N	L							
O	L	E	A	T	E	E	M	P	I	R	E			
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N	E	A	R	E	D	R	I	S	Q	U	E			
O	R	A	I	L	L	A	S	H						
M	G	L	A	C	I	A	L	T						
I	N	I	L	N	D	U	D	R						
T	E	A	C	U	P	I	N	H	E	R	E			
C	M	B	U	B	K	A	T	W	E					
N	U	D	G	E	D	A	V	A	I	L	S			
A	D	N	H	N	N									
S	C	O	T	E	L	K	S	U	R	A				

QUICK

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S	U	M	M	E	D	U	P							
E	S	C	A	P	A	D	E							

MENSA PUZZLE
6: the total of the numbers in each column alternates 20, 30, 20, 30

BULL'S EYE
LEPROUS, lope, lore, lose, loser, louse, lure, purl, role, rule, slop, plus, pole, pule, pulse, slope, slur, slurp, sole, soul

SUDOKU

3	4	6	8	9	5	2	1	7
1	9	7	3	6	2	5	8	4
5	8	2	1	7	4	9	3	6
7	6	8	5	3	9	1	4	2
4	3	5	2	1	8	6	7	9
9	2	1	7	4	6	8	5	3
6	5	3	9	8	7	4	2	1
2	7	4	6	5	1	3	9	8
8	1	9	4	2	3	7	6	5

ALPHA TRIANGLE
S, So, Sot, Most, Tomes, Metros, Mentors.

GO FIGURE
Easy
5 + 8 + 1 + 2 = 16
Medium
5 x 7 + 3 + 7 = 45
Hard
5 – 3 x 5 + 6 = 16

LOOP

KAKURO

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David Tennant to host BAFTA Film Awards—
Actor David Tennant is set to host the BAFTA Film Awards for the first time. The actor, best known for playing Doctor Who, will oversee the UK's biggest night for film on February 18

Family first

Deepika shares her thoughts on becoming a mother

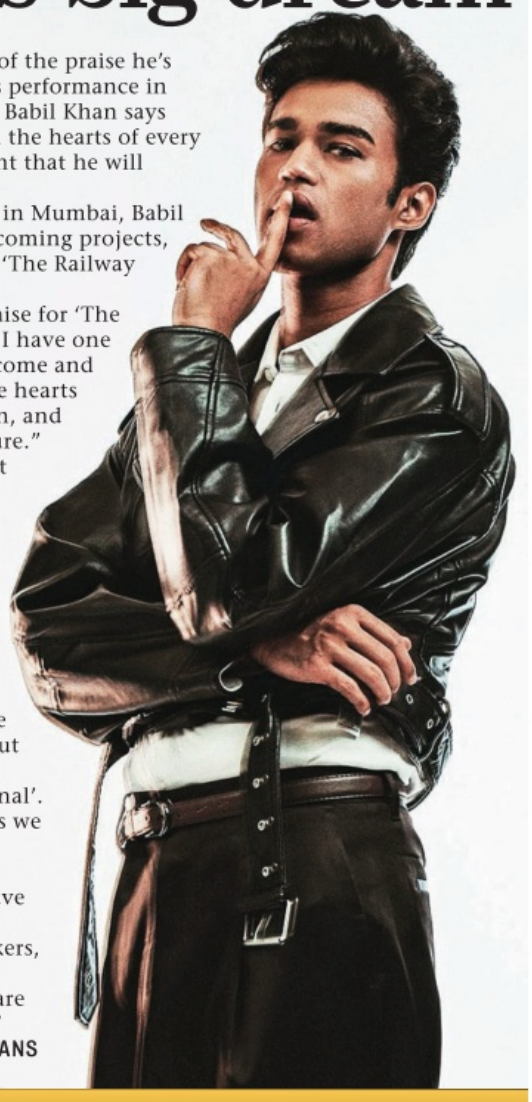
Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh's love story officially began on the sets of Sanjay Leela Bhansali's film Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela in 2012. The sparks flew and their relationship blossomed into something more than friendship. They tied the knot in a private ceremony in Italy on November 14 and 15, 2018. And now the couple is eager to start a family together.

During her recent interview with Vogue Singapore, Deepika talked about how Indian personalities have come a long way from not being recognised for their value to now being the face of one of the biggest luxury houses in the world. She added that she feels proud because she has done it on her own terms.

She further added that she is not fascinated by fame in isolation. She thinks that with fame one can do so much and believes that our choices, that we make consciously or subconsciously, have power through which you send out subtle messages. "When I meet the people I have grown up with they always mention how I haven't changed one bit. That says alot about our upbringing. My family keeps me grounded and Ranveer and I hope to inculcate the same values in our children," Deepika said.

In addition, when Deepika was asked if she is planning to become a mother, she replied with a smile on her face, "Absolutely. Ranveer and I love children. We look forward to the day when we will start our own family."—ETimes

Babil's big dream



Basking in the glow of the praise he's been getting for his performance in 'The Railway Men', Babil Khan says his only dream is to win the hearts of every Indian and he's confident that he will achieve it.

Speaking at an event in Mumbai, Babil also spoke about his upcoming projects, the love he received for 'The Railway Men' and much more.

Talking about the praise for 'The Railway Men', he said, "I have one dream. Characters will come and go, but I have to win the hearts of each and every Indian, and that I will achieve for sure."

On being asked about his late father Irrfan Khan's many international projects, Babil said, "My father never thought about national and international projects. He used to only connect with the story. If the story was good, he never used to think about whether the film was 'national' or 'international'. I feel these are the labels we audiences have made."

About his upcoming project, Babil said, "I have signed a non-disclosure agreement with my makers, so I cannot disclose anything. I can only share that it is a thriller film."

—IANS

Comedy that can make you cry out of frustration

ONLINE MADHUVE OFFLINE SHOBHANA
2.0 RATING ★★☆☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Bavaji Vempalli
- **ACTORS** Jagadish Kumar S, Sushmitha Sonu, Seerunde Raghu, Gajendra, Raghavi Shankar
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 136 minutes

The director of this film claims that it is a non-stop comedy drama but the audiences will be confused from the beginning of the movie because it is not clear whether it is a mega tele serial or a movie. The main theme - of getting married online and preparing for shobhana offline - itself fails to convince.

The movie opens with a married man (Gajendra) celebrating his wife's absence at home after 15 years of their marriage. He is seen empting liquor bottles in front of a liquor outlet. The opening scene itself tests the patience of the hapless audiences. After getting high, the person takes help of Google to reach Shyamasundar's aka Shyama's house. He finds Shyama in a woman's attire.

At this juncture, the director introduces a flashback narrating how the person arranged 100 trips to find a suitable girl for Shyama but none of the girls is ready to marry him. And how Shyama came to know about an app that arranges marriages online. Shyama gets a chance to marry Bhanumathi aka Bhama (Sushmitha Sonu) online. Finally, Shama prepares for a honeymoon with Bhama but she asks him to wait till she gets the OTP. What happens to Shama is what the movie is all about.

A majority of the cast is from Kannada reality shows. The problem with the actors is that they could not come out of the reality show hangover. Their body language, gestures and dialogue delivery are suited for reality shows where they have to yell at their co-stars.

The lead pair, who are a couple in real life, are seen yelling at each other throughout the movie. Some of the scenes, especially those where the prospective bridegroom visits a prospective bride look incongruous. Seerunde Raghu attempts to entertain the audiences but fails miserably.

It is worth a watch only if you have no other option to spend your hard-earned money and valuable time.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

Time is precious

ONTY BUNTY LOVE STORY
2.5 RATING ★★½☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Yatish Pannasamudra
- **ACTORS** Vaibhav Vardhan, Yatish Pannasamudra, Shweta Bhat Karwar Shruthi Chandrasekhar
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 154 minutes

This is Yatish Pannasamudra's maiden film as a director and actor. Yatish also plays the second lead in this film that talks about graduate students who while away their time.

The movie is about Onty (Vaibhava Vardhan) and Bunty aka Srimantha (Yatish Pannasamudra) who have finished graduation and are busy wandering on the roads and emptying liquor bottles. Onty desperately tries to get a girlfriend. Onty and Bunty happen to see Siri (Shruthi Chandrasekhar). Onty wants to follow her but Bunty discourages him saying that the daughter of Compound Cariayappa is more beautiful than Siri. Finally, Siri's father reveals Bunty's true colours to Onty. What happens to Bunty and Siri is what the movie is all about.

As far as the performance of the actors is concerned, all of them need to hone up their acting skills. Yatish, who is both one of the leads as well as director, comes off as a bit tired. The number of dialogues, shows that the director's focus is more on verbosity than action. Vaibhav Vardhan is good at mouthing dialogues but he has to improve his acting skills if he wants to keep going. Shruthi Chandrasekhar looks beautiful and is also good at emoting. Shwetha Bhat Karwar has nothing to do except making brief appearances at frequent intervals. Raju Sringeri, who plays puliyogare, provides some relief for the audiences. His performance at a pre-wedding photo shoot and in a bedroom can elicit a few laughs. Raghavendra Pujar, as a photographer, provides good support.

It is worth a watch if you are a graduate or unemployed and want to understand the value of time.

—Y Maheswara Reddy